

Court Information Release



Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

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the Northern District of Illinois
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Court Welcomes District Judge Mary M. Rowland in Ceremonial Investiture

Chicago, Ill. – On November 25, 2019, U.S. District Judge Mary M. Rowland was sworn in as district judge at a ceremonial investiture. She is the first open lesbian to serve as district judge in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

“This is a momentous day for our court. We are thrilled to welcome Judge Rowland to our district court bench. In her service to our court as a Magistrate Judge for seven years, Judge Rowland demonstrated that she is a thoughtful and skilled jurist. I am confident she will continue to be an asset to our district,” said Chief Judge Rebecca R. Pallmeyer.

Matthew J. Piers, Shareholder and President of Hughes, Socol, Piers, Resnick & Dym, Ltd. made the motion to administer the Oath of Office, and Chief Judge Pallmeyer administered the Oath.

U.S. Senator Dick Durbin; Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot; Lilly Rowland, Judge Rowland’s daughter; Heather C. Sawyer, Senate Judiciary Committee Staff Director/Chief Counsel; and John F. Murphy, Executive Director of the Federal Defender Program all offered remarks.

Judge Rowland received her undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan and her law degree from the University of Chicago. She then served as a law clerk to Judge Julian Abele Cook, Jr. of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. She went on to serve for ten years in the Chicago Office of the Federal Defender, first as staff attorney and then as the chief appellate attorney. She later joined the firm of Hughes, Socol, Piers, Resnick & Dym Ltd. as a partner prior to her selection as a federal magistrate judge for the U.S. District Court for the

Northern District of Illinois in 2012. Judge Rowland was nominated to the seat vacated by Judge Amy J. St. Eve, who was elevated to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit on May 23, 2018.

Judge Rowland officially joined the district court bench on August 22, 2019.

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Photos by Jim Slonoff



Above: Judge Rowland is sworn in by Chief Judge Pallmeyer as Julie Justicz, Judge Rowland's wife, and Lilly Rowland, their daughter, look on.



Above: Mayor Lightfoot offers remarks.



Above: Senator Durbin offers remarks.